

cautions must be observed. Before any safe conclusions can be derived from the answers given, it is essential that these should not be simply in the affirmative or negative, even if they at the same time present the result of treatment, whether favourable or unfavourable; the answers must, in order to be of any value, include also an account of the particular character of the disease in each case prescribed for; the age, sex, constitution, occupation, and personal habits of the patient; the character of the location in which he resides, and the construction, position, and domestic condition of the house he occupies; and, even further still, the *morbific constitution* of the season during which each case occurred.

The prevailing error in reference to special therapeutics is the supposition that there is an invariable treatment, a particular class and succession of remedies, adapted to each disease; that the name of a disease being determined, the nature of the exact means adapted for its cure follows as a matter of course. The fact that a certain physician, in a certain place, cured nine-tenths of the patients affected with any given malady with the use or without the use of depletion, mercury, or stimulants, is no safe basis upon which to determine the propriety and success of a similar course of treatment in the same disease in a subsequent year or at a different locality, or in a different class of patients.

The precise therapeutic effects of all our remedial agents being well established by cautious and repeated observations, they are to be applied to the control of disease according to the special indications presented by each individual case. It is in this application—it is in the judicious use of the remedies at his command best adapted to the control of each case of disease that presents itself, in connection with his facility in arriving at a prompt and accurate diagnosis, that the true skill of the practitioner is exhibited. The physician who tells us that he treats this or that disease by such and such remedies is at best a mere routinist, and his experience is valueless as a guide to direct others to the successful treatment of the same malady as it presents itself in a different class of patients, at a different season, or in a different section of country.

D. F. C.

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ART. XVIII.—*Catalogue Raisonné of the Medical Library of the Pennsylvania Hospital.* By EMIL FISCHER, M. D. Printed by order of the Board of Managers. 8vo. pp. 750. Philadelphia, 1857.

In the year 1762, the celebrated Dr. John Fothergill presented to the Pennsylvania Hospital *Lewis's Experimental History of the Materia Medica*, “for the benefit,” as the record says, “of the young students in physic who may attend under the directions of the physicians.” Upon this hint, the managers acted, for we find them in the following year originating the library, the catalogue of which is now before us.

Even at this early period, the hospital, under the teaching of such men as the two Bonds (Thomas and Phineas), Thomas Cadwalader, and Cadwalader Evans, had become famous for its clinical instruction, and the wards of the house were so largely attended that the managers thought it necessary to demand an admission fee.

According to the then custom of British hospitals, all funds thus accruing belonged exclusively to the attending physicians and surgeons; these gentlemen, however, with a noble generosity, yielded all claim to the money, and proposed to apply it “to the foundation of a medical library for the advantage of the pupils of the Institution.” Truly, we should remember these men of old with grateful remembrance. They were men not of the common stamp, endowed with all the medical learning of their time, and with a Christian philanthropy never surpassed, they stand out in bold relief as models for imitation. To them and to their immediate successors, Philadelphia owes the high position to which she has attained in the medical history of our country. They made her, as has been happily said, “the very atmosphere of medicine.”

For years after their departure, our medical institutions felt the impress of their character, and it might be readily shown that, in proportion as *these* have departed from *their* high standard, just in that proportion have they suffered in reputation and standing. What has been so eloquently said of others, may with greater force be said of them. "They have passed away and we have entered into their labours. But, though dead, they yet speak to us in that which they have left us. They speak to us in the noble reputation they have acquired for our institutions, and which we are bound to maintain. They speak to us in the ardent zeal of their pursuit after truth, which they call upon us to imitate, and again they speak to us in the individual celebrity which they acquired, and encourage us to similar attainments. Let us then bow low at the mention of their names, and bless God for giving us such an ancestry."

The library thus founded increased by liberal donations and judicious purchases, made chiefly by Dr. Lettsom, of London, with great rapidity.

The first catalogue was printed in 1790, when the number of books was 528 volumes. This was followed, in 1794, by an additional part. A catalogue was again issued in 1806, to which was added a supplement in 1818. In 1827, in consequence of the very large accession of books to the library, another edition of the catalogue was considered necessary. This was compiled by W. G. Malin, then librarian (now the very able and efficient steward of the Institution), and embraced all the previous catalogues. A supplement followed this in 1837, the library then numbering 7,300 volumes. Since that time, the average number of books yearly added to the collection has been 160, so that it contains at present 10,500 volumes.

Thus it is seen how, by judicious management, has been gathered around a single volume—the gift of Fothergill, the largest and best collection of medical books in the United States—a library worthy of the medical metropolis of the Union, and no unfit monument to the memory of the great and good men, its founders.

After this short and imperfect account of the origin and present state of the library, we shall allow Dr. Fischer to introduce his volume to our readers in his own words. "The present catalogue is an entirely new work, and has been compiled independently of its predecessors. For the old plan of disposing the works in the alphabetical order of the names of their authors a classified arrangement according to subjects has been substituted. The advantages of a catalogue raisonné are so evident that it is hardly necessary to particularize them. Not only the student who is anxious to familiarize himself with the depth and breadth of medical literature, but also the medical writer in his laborious research for authorities which he might consult on the subject of his investigation, will derive material aid from a work of this kind."

The arrangement adopted is that of the catalogue of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, which was published in 1837, the year in which the Society reached its centenary period.

In selecting this as his model, Dr. Fischer did well, for undoubtedly it is the best "digested" or "methodized" catalogue ever published. It is not, however, a catalogue raisonné, and we regret that the Dr. has retained its very objectionable title. A catalogue raisonné, properly so called, is one which gives under each book, worthy of such a note, a bibliographical, critical, and literary notice of the volume. Without doubt, it is the best plan for the collection of an amateur, but is altogether too bulky for a large public library.

In support of what we say, we may refer to Ch. Nodier's *Nouveaux Mélanges*, Paris, 1844. This is a catalogue raisonné of some 1200 volumes, yet it forms a goodly sized 8vo. vol. of 500 pages. At this rate, our volume would have reached about 4375 pages.

Should any of our readers feel disposed to look into the different systems which have been devised for catalogue-making, we cannot do better than refer them to Gabriel Peignot's *Dictionnaire de Bibliologie*, 3 vols., Paris, 1802-4, where they will find the subject discussed with all the *gusto* of a true bibliomane, and where they may learn *this*, if nothing else, that it takes something more than a mere scrivener to draw up a good catalogue.

We shall now say a few words on the volume before us. Following his model, Dr. Fischer divides his catalogue into four parts; the first relating to works on medicine; the second to those on science, including physics and chemistry, natural history and psychology; the third to those on general literature; and the fourth to miscellaneous works not referable to any of the preceding heads, and the journals, reviews, and other periodical publications; then comes a very full and complete index of the names of authors.

The department in which we are most concerned—that of medicine—is subdivided into chapters in the following manner: Anatomy, Human and Comparative; Physiology; *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy, including Hygiene and Therapeutics; General Pathology and Practice of Physic; Surgery; Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children; Medical Jurisprudence and Medical Police; and Medical Literature.

Under each of these heads, the respective works are carefully and ably arranged, exhibiting a very considerable acquaintance with medical literature. The arrangement is so complete and full that the student can readily put his hand upon the principal works which he may wish to consult, in order to enable him to follow up any branch of inquiry. In this respect, the catalogue is invaluable, not only to the student, but to every member of the profession who can get access to the library.

We might further add that the classification and subclassification of the different chapters coincide, as far as it could be done in a work of this kind, with those adopted in systematic treatises on the different branches of medical and general science. Only in those instances where no scientific ground for classification could be found, the alphabetical arrangement has been had recourse to.

In going over the catalogue, which we have done with some care, we have been struck with the small number of German and Italian works on medicine; of French and English medical literature, on the contrary, there is an excellent representation; and we have to express our regret at meeting with so few of our own medical journals of the present day. Surely this is a mistake that should be remedied. Journal-literature should ever form a prominent department in all medical libraries; especially should this be the case in our country, in consequence of its vast extent and great diversity of climate. Of the older journals, several of the sets are incomplete; these should be completed without delay, as many of them are becoming so scarce that, in a short time, it will be impossible to do so.

We have thus hastily brought the volume before us to the notice of our readers. Any recommendation of it would be superfluous. We believe that its existence can no sooner be known than its great value will be recognized.

To the Board of Managers of the Hospital we are greatly indebted for this work, and we congratulate them and the profession on the creditable and useful manner in which it has been "gotten up." They were most fortunate in obtaining the services of one so well calculated as Dr. Fischer to undertake a work so laborious and difficult. None but those who have been engaged in such an undertaking can in any way appreciate the enormous labour which it entails. "Of the time and labour," says Sir John Forbes, speaking of his *Medical Bibliography*, "bestowed on the following pages, it may be prudent not to speak, lest the actual scantiness of the harvest should appear still more conspicuous in relation to the extent of the workman's toil. We may, however, venture to say this much, that no one who has not actually made the trial is likely to form an accurate estimate of either the one or the other." Dr. Fischer brought to the work all the qualities necessary for a successful issue—education, scientific knowledge, great perseverance, and withal, a love of the thing. The result has been that to him belongs the honour of having compiled the best medical catalogue in the English language. We congratulate him most sincerely on having performed so severe a task in so able a manner—a task which few would have had the courage to undertake, and still fewer the ability to carry through.

S. L.